

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

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AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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CINCUSAFE

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CINCUSAREUR

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

S E C R E T ANKARA 0629

EXDIS

MILITARY ADEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3 INDEFINITE

TAGS: MASS, MARR, PFOR, TU

SUBJECT: TURKISH BASE NEGOTIATIONS: TAX RELIEF AND SOFA
IMPLEMENTATION

REF A) STATE 16940, B) ANKARA 583

1. AT CONCLUSION OF JANUARY 23 NEGOTIATING SESSION I
PRESSED MFA SECGEN ELEKDAG TO STATE WHETHER GOT COULD
ACCEPT A REFERENCE TO CONTINUING VALIDITY OF PROVISIONS
OF 1954 TAX RELIEF AGREEMENT IN THE NEW DEFENSE COOPER-
ATION AGREEMENT. I SAID IT WAS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL

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THAT WE CONTINUE TO HAVE EACH OF THESE EXEMPTIONS

IF WE WERE TO BE ABLE TO OPERATE HERE. IF THE GOT WAS UNWILLING TO REINSTITUTE THE 1954 AGREEMENT, I WONDERED HOW IT ENVISIONED MEETING OUR REQUIREMENTS. WE HAVE TO HAVE, I STRESSED, THESE REQUIREMENTS MET AT THE TIME OUR NEW SECURITY AGREEMENT IS SIGNED, AND I ARGUED THAT FROM A PRACTICAL VIEWPOINT IT WAS A GREAT MISTAKE TO TRY TO NEGOTIATE AN ENTIRELY NEW TAX RELIEF PROVISION BETWEEN NOW AND FEBRUARY 11-12.

2. AFTER A CONSIDERABLE PAUSE, ELEKDAG STATED THAT TURKISH ARTICLE XXIV PROVIDING FOR THE TERMINATION OF "PROVISIONAL STATUS" UPON ENTERING INTO FORCE OF THE NEW AGREEMENT WOULD GIVE THE GOT AN OPPORTUNITY TO STATE THAT THE TAX RELIEF AGREEMENT IS AGAIN IN EFFECT. (MFA DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS ASULA, WHO WAS FLANKING ELEKDAG AT THE SESSION, CLEARLY AGREED WITH THIS STATEMENT, THUS INDICATING THAT HIS EARLIER STATEMENT REGARDING PARLIAMENTARY REPEAL OF THE AGREEMENT WAS NOT RPT NOT CORRECT - REF B.) WHEN I NOTED THAT USG WOULD REQUIRE SOME ASSURANCE THAT THIS PROCEDURE WOULD BE FOLLOWED, ELEKDAG SAID HE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO MAKE AN "OFFICIAL STATEMENT" ON THIS MATTER IN THE NEXT OR SUBSEQUENT MEETING.

3. I THEN NOTED THAT THE SOFA EXTENSION AND IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENTS MIGHT BE REACTIVATED IN THE SAME MANNER. AFTER ANOTHER LONG PAUSE, ELEKDAG SAID SOFA PROVISIONS BELONGED IN ANOTHER CATEGORY BUT THAT GOT BELIEVED IT COULD FIND SOME SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENTS USING THE SOFA ITSELF. I EXPRESSED EXTREME SKEPTICISM THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE AND WENT OVER THE LIST AGAIN WITH HIM OF MATTERS WHICH WE FELT WERE ESSENTIAL TO COVER (REF B). ELEKDAG SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT OUR NEEDS COULD BE MET BY AN EXPANDED INTERPRETATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE SOFA ITSELF. I CONTINUED TO BE EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL THIS COULD BE POSSIBLE BUT SAID I COULD NOT ACTUALLY REJECT HIS IDEA UNTIL HE SHOWED ME IN WRITING WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT. I ASKED HIM TO DO THIS SOONEST BECAUSE I WAS QUITE SURE THIS WOULD NOT BE SATIS-

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FACTORY ROUTE TO GO AND I DID NOT WANT TO LOSE VALUABLE NEGOTIATING TIME ON THIS SUBJECT BETWEEN NOW AND THEN. I ALSO AGAIN NOTED THAT WE HAVE NATO IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENTS WITH EVERY OTHER NATO COUNTRY WHERE WE HAVE MILITARY PERSONNEL. I EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT WASHINGTON WAS NOT LIKELY TO AGREE TO A BREAK IN THIS PATTERN. ELEKDAG INSISTED THAT OUR NEEDS COULD BE MET IN THIS WAY. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ON TIMING,

ELEKDAG SAID HE HAD SOME MORE WORK TO ACCOMPLISH WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES, AND THAT IN THIS REGARD HE WOULD BE CALLING IN SECRETARIES GENERAL FROM OTHER MINISTRIES BUT, WHEN FURTHER PRESSED, PROMISED ME A PROPOSAL IN ONE WEEK.

4. COMMENT: ELEKDAG'S TAX RELIEF PROPOSAL MAY WELL REPRESENT AN IMPORTANT BREAKTHROUGH ON ONE OF OUR THORNIEST ISSUES. WE WILL RESERVE FURTHER COMMENT, HOWEVER, UNTIL WE HEAR HIS "OFFICIAL STATEMENT."
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